

MAYOR MITCHELL'S REVIEWS ADMINISTRATIVE WORK

MAYOR JOHN PURROY MITCHELL.

PLEDGES TO PEOPLE KEPT, SAYS MITCHELL

Continued from page 1

way that it can be done is through the medium of the press. I have always welcomed the fullest discussion of public business in the newspapers, and I have sought to make it a cardinal principle in my programme to facilitate this discussion in every possible way.

A Publicity Policy.

In line with this policy the heads of departments are submitting to me reviews of their six months' work. These reviews are being given to the press in compact form for publication. Heretofore, departmental reports have generally been delayed, sometimes for a year or two, after the period to which they applied closed. We are now seeking to submit the reports while the matters to which they relate are still fresh and vital parts of our current business.

In my campaign I pledged myself to the fullest public access to all city affairs. Up to date I have sought to live up to this pledge and I propose to live up to it in the future.

It is doubtless impossible in conducting a great enterprise such as the City of New York not to make mistakes. It is an important part of the public's business to recognize and report mistakes as it is to recognize and report achievements. The business of the city government is the public's business. It cannot be conducted in secret. It is the duty of the public to know what it does and how it does it, and it is subject to public scrutiny and suggestion.

Civil Bodies Help.

The administration has enjoyed to a very marked extent the help of the various citizen bodies. The great business and civic organizations and the philanthropic organizations all have in their respective fields helped us in getting information regarding questions of importance and have cooperated in working out better methods for carrying on the city's business.

Keeps Pledges Before Him.

I have in my desk, classified by subjects, the different specific pledges which I made during the campaign. These pledges I regard as contracts between myself as mayor and the people of New York. I propose to live up to them. Where we find that plans must be changed in actual operation from plans outlined last fall, we shall say so. It is our duty to invite discussion of important policies.

This method was followed, for example, in framing a working policy for the handling of all-night liquor. It was our duty to get the interest and welfare of the city as a whole into our heads, to make it a law, to determine by public opinion and administrative judgment.

By this means I am not seeking to make the public share responsibility with me for results, but to obtain in every legitimate way the benefit of public suggestions in dealing with questions that do not affect officials personally, but affect the interest and welfare of the city. No man is wise enough to decide these matters without the counsel of those who live in the city.

WANT THE CITY CONDUCTED ON BUSINESS PRINCIPLES

The elements that combined to elect the present administration represented various points of view with regard to questions of public policy, but they were a unit in one great demand, and that was that the business of the City of New York should be conducted as efficiently as any enterprise that men conduct anywhere, and that its object should not be to develop the power of any group or faction, but to render in full measure service to the public in return for the powers and resources which have been committed to it.

I regard it as my first task, therefore, to put the business of the city on a basis of efficiency.

It is my good fortune to have had seven years of intimate contact with city management. For three years, as Commissioner of Accounts in connection with investigations of various departments, I came to understand the problems of those departments and to learn where there were opportunities for betterment. In the Board of Estimate and Apportionment, I had opportunity to understand the general problems of administering the finances of the city. So that on the first of June I took hold of the City of New York as I took hold of a business, and with a fairly definite programme in mind.

The City Government a Vast Enterprise and the Mayor's Part.

There are few enterprises in the world whose volume of business exceeds the business transacted in a year by the City of New York. The City of New York has 1,000,000 employees, 103 different departments of government! These facts merely suggest the magnitude and scope of the work of the City of New York. The Mayor of New York has broad powers, but he by no means controls the business of the city.

A Letter to You, Mr. Purchaser of Imported Underwear

American Hosiery Co. FINE KNIT GOODS 225 Fourth Ave., New York

Dear Sir—

Have you made a close comparison between American Hosiery Underwear and what you buy abroad? When you do so, you will readily see that our Underwear is at least equal to the foreign in fabric and finish and is unquestionably superior in fit in almost every instance.

You will find also that our prices are consistent with the superior and standard quality of which nine highest awards are abundant proof. All retail stores supply it.

Yours truly,
AMERICAN HOSEIERY CO.

I regard this policy as fundamental in proper American city government.

We made many definite pledges. We do not expect to keep them to the letter, but we should carry them to their full fulfillment in six months. But it was expected of us, and we have undertaken, to begin the work of their fulfillment at the beginning of the administration. These pledges fall into two broad groups—those that relate to the economy and efficiency of administration and those that relate to the extension of public service, to improving the character of public service and the provision of better facilities for public service on the part of the government.

What Is Expected of the City Government.

The demand of the voters at the last election, as I understood it, was that we should undertake a complete stamping out of the kind of government that has been the rule in this city; private profit at public expense, or the sacrifice of public interest to private interest, individual or corporate. There was on January 1 no great issue of public policy before the people, similar to the subway issue, which was settled by majority action of the Board of Estimate in the last administration. There were, however, great problems of public improvement, such as the West Side terminal improvement, the South Brooklyn terminal improvement, and the general development of port and terminal facilities.

The major task that confronted us was to organize the departments of the city government for business; to cleanse them of politics, to remove worn-out methods, to install an esprit de corps in the body of employees by fair dealing, and to set the wheels of the government in operation to produce better conditions throughout the city.

Public Service Corporations Under the City's Eye.

There are two sides to the problem of public service. There is the public service rendered by government, and there is the public service required and expected of enfranchised companies. The state has placed the control of these public service corporations in the hands of the Public Service Commission, but the city has, none the less, a very vital and continuing interest in the efficiency and character of the service rendered by the public service corporations. It is the duty of the city to represent the public as complainant wherever dissatisfaction arises with regard to the service rendered by public service corporations. I have, therefore, under the Board of Estimate and Apportionment, in the Corporation Counsel's office which will deal with these matters. If there is any ground for contesting the character of service rendered by enfranchised corporations, the city should not be inactive merely because there is a public service commission clothed with power to deal with these questions. The Board of Estimate and Apportionment, on the contrary, to keep a very vigilant eye on matters of this kind.

The Board of Estimate and Apportionment, when the Legislature does not interfere, has the first and last word in regard to city expenditures. The Board of Estimate is in a very real sense the business of the city. The Mayor has jurisdiction over twenty-seven departments, whose budgets for 1914 total \$81,000,000. The Board of Estimate and Apportionment controls the allowance of funds, determines how much shall be spent, and in a large measure how it shall be spent. The Board of Estimate and Apportionment controls the allowance of funds, determines how much shall be spent, and in a large measure how it shall be spent. The Board of Estimate and Apportionment controls the allowance of funds, determines how much shall be spent, and in a large measure how it shall be spent.

It would be impossible, therefore, to conduct successfully the business of the City of New York without intimate cooperation between the Board of Estimate and the Board of Aldermen on the one hand and the Mayor and the Mayor's departments on the other hand. It would be impossible to establish economy and efficiency or to carry out constructive improvements for the city if the Mayor and these boards, particularly the Board of Estimate, did not work in close co-operation.

The Board of Estimate and Apportionment Reorganized.

At the outset I realized, therefore, that one of my principal obligations was to work in close harmony with the Board of Estimate and to join with its other members in placing the board's business on an efficient basis. One of our first undertakings was to reorganize the board's work. We had, on December 31, seventy-five special committees composed of the different members of the board in different combinations considering the great number of questions with which the board was week by week called upon to deal. We found that the work of these seventy-five special committees fell into fifteen groups. We, therefore, organized fifteen standing committees to deal with these subjects, and an additional committee to take up charter revision. Among the fifteen committees are committees on such important matters as the following:

Port and terminal facilities.
Franchises.
Transit.
City plan.
Markets.
Social welfare.
Tax and corporate stock budgets.

We next adopted definite rules to govern the business of the board. These rules have never been done before. Now all business coming before us passes through the channels of the standing committees, which carefully consider it and are able to report intelligent and well-thought-out suggestions to the board for its adoption or rejection.

In this way we have brought system out of chaos and laid a permanent basis for intelligent and harmonious action on the part of the board. We are no longer a group of independent units, logging on or working in opposition, as the case may be, but as a well organized business body.

This is a matter of great satisfaction to me and of great help in carrying on the work of departments. We lose no time in futile discussion, in squabbling or in looking horns because of opposing ideas. All differences are thrashed out in committees. The re-



PHOTO © MARCEAU

sult is that we now find it possible to deal more quickly and effectively with the business that comes before us. All this is of great advantage to the management of the departments of the government and is productive of economy in time and funds.

In addition to organizing standing committees we established two new bureaus in the board to carry on work

begun during the last administration. One is the bureau of standards and the other the bureau of contract supervision. The bureau of standards is continuing the work formerly conducted by the board in the supervision, in preparing specifications for the purchase of supplies and in establishing a proper basis for the city's payrolls.

STANDARDIZATION WILL NOT REDUCE CITY SALARIES

There has been a good deal of misunderstanding of the purpose of salary standardization. Employees in the city have got the impression that the sole purpose of salary standardization is to reduce salaries. This is not so. We are more anxious to assist employees in preparing themselves for more serviceable work, and therefore better compensation, than we are to reduce their salaries on the basis of their present worth. Salary schedules must be based on the work that must be done and not on the particular employees who are now performing this work.

Combined with salary standardization there must be a complete revision of the classified civil service lists and promotional system. We want to make promotion throughout the ranks of city employees definite and assured. The basis of the classification of employees, salary regulation without civil service regulation will get us nowhere. I think that we are clear on this. In the long run, a scientific plan will mean a great deal to taxpayers and will be an advantage to city employees. We shall not tolerate inefficiency, but we must organize and encourage good service.

Employees' Relationships Mr. Mitchell's Personal Concern.

I propose to give a good deal of personal attention to this question, for I am particularly anxious that we shall make the City of New York not merely an exacting employer, but a good employer. To this end we have under way definite plans for establishing better relationships between the executive forces of the government and the working forces of the government.

A committee of department heads has been appointed to consider a plan proposed for establishing employees' conferences on work subjects and on questions affecting the interests of employees.

The commission on pensions appointed by Mayor Gaynor has been continued under this administration to work out a sound, just and scientific pension plan in order that faithful employees who live out the terms of their active usefulness may retire on an equitable basis.

All the world over it is now recognized that no great business can be efficiently conducted if there is a constant conflict between those responsible for management and the working forces. This is now so clearly recognized in the United States that the President, with the approval of the Congress, has appointed a Commission of Industrial Relations to study the questions involved in employment throughout the United States. The problems of fair dealing and justice and mutual understanding that are so important in the management of a private business are as pointed and important in public business. We are going beyond this. Wherever the departmental employees desire it, we are establishing the semi-monthly payrolls with the salary loan evil, which for many years has been the cause of very serious hardship to city employees.

We have established a fair vacation plan for salaried employees and by honest play we are obtaining it. Except during the summer months, we have established the 9 to 5 o'clock working day.

We do not propose to go to extremes in these matters or go beyond the limit of good business dealing. We are not forgetting our responsibility to the taxpayers, nor do I believe we shall be asked to forget this responsibility by the city employees.

We are insisting upon a full measure of service throughout all the departments. We expect reciprocity from the employees and I am very glad to say we are obtaining it. Except during the summer months, we have established the 9 to 5 o'clock working day.

The Mayor as General Manager.

Immediately in January I undertook to reorganize the Mayor's office. The Mayor is the executive head of the departments under his control. He is responsible for them and is required by the charter as well as by good business

principle to organize this office in a way that will make it most useful to the Mayor and along lines which will harmonize with a programme of constructive work. In my view a successful and efficient Mayor must be not merely the spokesman and titular head of the city government, but the city's general manager.

In line with this policy I have reorganized the Mayor's office and centralized the office of the Chamberlain in staff immediately available to me for executive control. Instead of expecting merely that the Chamberlain should be responsible for the Chamberlain's staff, I am expecting that official to assist me in the work of business reorganization and control. I have appointed a special secretary to keep me informed of all matters coming before the Board of Estimate and the Board of Aldermen.

By all this I do not mean that there should not be left to the individual department heads fullest discretion and responsibility. This is provided for by the charter, and it is good organization as well, but there are a great number of questions which affect all departments and which must be brought to the attention of every department special improvements and methods worked out in any of them. The Mayor must have a general view of the city's business. He must have means of getting information regarding questions which are submitted to him by department heads. He must have means of assisting them in working out their own problems. In other words, the Mayor, instead of being removed from the city government at arms' length, must be an intimate part of it. I have felt this so strongly that I am making plans to spend part of my time in the Municipal Building where I can come into more intimate contact with my department heads. As a part of this policy I have undertaken to make personal visits to the various departments to come in first-hand contact with their work.

The completion of the Municipal Building has greatly facilitated the work of the Mayor and the heads of departments. With the exception of docks and police, and one of two small departments, the offices of the city government are now located in one building. This will result in very material economies. Mayor McClellan's administration deserves great credit for initiating the construction of the Municipal Building.

The Mayor's Business View of the Relation of the Departments.

The various city departments are not intended to be merely a collection of independent and unrelated jurisdictions. The very word "department" indicates that they are a part of a larger whole. Each, it is true, has its specific work to perform, but together they perform the work of the city. Each department has problems in common. They all have similar questions of policy and business to determine. Most of them have, for example, buildings to maintain. All of them must do their work in harmony with the Mayor, and must, therefore, have plans for organizing and supervising the employees to get effective results. All must purchase supplies. All have contracts to execute. All have to deal with the public in one way or another. The departments by and large are of like character.

It is of very great benefit, therefore, to have close contact between the heads of the departments to bring them into conference. In order to establish this contact and to give each department the benefit of the suggestions of every other department, I have established a plan of monthly conferences, or cabinet meetings, take up specific questions for discussion. We assign to committees of department heads matters which are of general importance. In this way we have a committee of department heads on the question of purchasing, another on the question of equipment, another on the question of maintenance of the city's buildings, another on the question of the relation of department heads to employees.

I find that these conferences are very useful. They are a practical way of bringing the heads of the departments into contact with each other. I believe, not only effective co-operative work in the Board of Estimate and Apportionment, but effective team work in the Mayor's office. I work among the several departments, one with the Mayor and all with the other great divisions of the government.

SELECTION OF "CABINET" WAS NOT AN EASY TASK

Before it was possible to begin the work of these six months I had to select a "cabinet" of department heads to conduct the business of the city. This is not a easy task as it might appear. It is true that there are a great many persons willing to undertake the responsibility of running a city department, but it is not a simple matter to find executives who combine administrative ability with training and the right point of view regarding the opportunities and limitations of one of the great divisions of city activity.

I proceeded very cautiously and deliberately in selecting the heads of departments. I do not think it necessary or appropriate at this time to comment on the character of these selections. I should say that in every case I sought first to find a person with some distinct training for the work to be committed to him. I wanted to have department heads who were not only in close sympathy with the purposes of the administration, but also with the appointment of deputies and administrative assistants.

The Mayor and his department heads have our hundred so-called "exempt" positions to fill. In many instances, of course, appointees remain over from term to term, but in the development of a new programme it is not enough merely to have positions to fill. It is necessary to have persons who are specially equipped to do the work of the department. I have, therefore, selected a number of persons to fill the exempt positions. I have asked applicants to submit their applications on printed blanks, just as they are required to do in applying for positions in any other great corporation. This is the first time, I suppose, that this practice was followed in this or any other city. Before January 1 I received 7,500 separate applications for the four hundred exempt positions. For the Police Commissioner's and the four deputyships in that department I received 275 applications. For the seventy-five Assistant Corporation Counselships I received more than eight hundred applications. Supporting these applications there were addressed to me upward of 25,000 letters of recommendation and endorsement, with petitions totalling more than 75,000 or 100,000 signatures.

There are two problems to assist me in selecting the administrative staff of a city—one, to get competent and efficient employees, and the second, to have Charter Revision Not To Be Rushed.

I have mentioned that we organized a standing committee on charter revision of the Board of Estimate and Apportionment. The Board of Aldermen is to be represented on the committee, together with the public by the appointees of the Mayor. We took this step in preparation for charter work because it is generally recognized that the city charter needs revision in a number of particulars. Some

A little emphatic but not without reason

You cannot get a better location than the Equitable Building, you cannot get more central, accessible, reputable location, nor one that is better known—and you cannot get a more modern building nor one that will be more efficiently conducted for its tenants, not though you erect and run a building of your own.

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Leases now being made from May 1, 1915. The building, however, is due to be completed 2 or 3 months ahead of that date.

Equitable Building
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term of the present administration expires.

The plans, formulated under the late administration, for a settlement of the West Side Central difficulty on the New York Central difficulty on the West Side of Manhattan Island are undergoing thorough scrutiny and revision. When finally adopted it is my hope that they will include a plan of terminal facilities for all the railroad whose rail terminals are located on the Jersey shore.

The plans for the South Brooklyn Terminal Marginal Freight Railway, adopted under the last administration, have just been reported to the Board of Estimate by the terminal committee, with recommendation for radical amendment greatly advantageous to the city and the locality. This railway, which is now wisely proposed to make elevated throughout the entire length of its main line, can be acquired and construction completed for approximately \$11,000,000, and through an arrangement with the railroad which are to operate can be made self-supporting practically at once. The project can be completed and placed in operation within two years, provided the city receives from the Legislature and the Governor the legislation necessary to permit the making of the proposed contract of operating with the trunk line railroads. The necessary funds are available, and there is no reason why the project should not go forward rapidly to completion.

While these great projects are being pushed the Dock Department is actively engaged in building and reconstructing piers and in readjusting leases to meet the pressing demand for more space for the shipping of the port.

The Department of Correction is being revolutionized under Commissioner Davis. The public knows of this work and is watching it with interest.

Water and Street Cleaning.

In the Water Department Commissioner Williams is dealing with a number of great questions. One of particular importance is the question of city lighting, involving vast expenditure, and another is providing a proper water supply for the outlying boroughs, particularly the Borough of Queens. The completion of the new water system is close at hand, and in 1915 extensive plans are available for distribution in the boroughs of Brooklyn and Queens water from the Catskills.

In the Street Cleaning Department Commissioner Fetherston is taking up the work of modernizing our street cleaning methods and placing them on a level with the best practice of Europe.

BETTER BUSINESS DEALINGS CUTS OUT CORRUPTION

The owners of real estate in New York City have for several years been concerned with the tax burden. A number of suggestions have been made for radical revision of our system of taxation. This matter, of such fundamental importance to business and commercial welfare of the city, cannot be dealt with offhand. In order that we may have the best judgment possible in reaching a conclusion as to whether any changes should be made in our methods of taxation, I have appointed an advisory commission of tax experts under the leadership of Mr. Al-

fred E. Marling. This committee is working with the Tax Department in making a thorough study of our taxation methods and methods employed in other communities. The whole business of the city is based on taxation. It is therefore the highest importance that methods of taxation should be thoroughly equitable and thoroughly modern.

One important phase of the work of city administration is to establish proper business relationships with

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